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# The LABOUR ORGANISER

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**LOCAL  
ELECTIONS**

**Get Ready  
for  
November  
—NOW !**

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## LOCAL ELECTION SURVEY

# We'll Have To Fight This November

By HAROLD CROFT

The municipal elections of this year will be a severer test of the adequacy of election organisation than was the case last November. Then the tide of Labour enthusiasm of the general election was still flowing and electors flocked eagerly to the polling booths when the local standard of Labour was raised. This year, while we believe the disposition to vote Labour is there, it will be in a more dormant or latent form, and will require organised stimulus to prompt it to active and full polling. Hence the necessity to prepare an adequate organisation to mobilise all possible votes, and to achieve or maintain ascendancy over the redoubled efforts that the opposition candidates may be expected to make in the borough elections.

Borough Party Executives are urged to give immediate consideration to the layout of an electoral organisation and policy that shall be effective for Labour success.

### Selecting Candidates

If candidates have not yet been selected, special procedure should be put into effect. As a period of one month is necessary for all affiliated bodies and party sections to promote nominees, there is no time to be lost and circulators should go out at once. In order to save later correspondence and delays it will be wise to duplicate forms in the

style of the parliamentary nomination form in the appendix to the model rules. Information to be requested should include surname, christian names, address, occupation. How qualified (1) name on register, or (2) 12 months residence, or (3) owns any land or property however modest. Nominating body with signature of secretary or chairman. The following paragraph to be inserted—"I am an individual member of the Party and consent to my nomination as above, and if elected will undertake to accept and conform with the Standing Orders for the Labour Group as approved by the N.E.C." The nominee will sign the declaration. Notes as to the record of the nominee should be written on the back of the form. An early meeting of the G.C. should be held to review the forms and to compile the full panel to be circulated expeditiously to the wards for selection under the provisions of the rules.

### Key Workers

Now is the time to be listing the names of members who will act as Candidates' Agents, Committee Room Clerks, and in other key posts. If desirable, training classes should be held for key workers. Head Office can supply a Compendium of Notes and Specimen Material for Tutors or Leaders of such classes. Three practical

classes are usually held. The first dealing with the general procedure of an election, nomination and polling, the second with the Canvass, and the third with the Committee Room procedure.

If classes are not run, there should be a general meeting or ward meetings of workers at which the outline of the campaign and practical procedure is explained.

### **Canvass is Essential**

This is the pivotal work of an election. If no canvass is carried through it means that polling day organisation will be blind and to a degree futile. Without a canvass a party deprives itself of a full reaping of what it has sown in previous work and propaganda and so can easily lose elections. Canvassers can be obtained if it is made clear to them that they are not required to argue on doorsteps but only to deliver literature and to ask a simple question which will elicit an indication whether the person is favourable, doubtful or against.

There should be no hesitancy about making arrangements for a canvass however simple.

Where the system to be used is that of register pages pasted on cards, an estimate of the number of cards required should be made and the cards ordered from a printer at once. To leave this matter till the eve of the election is to court delay and exasperation and perhaps failure. Where canvass cards have previously been used and are available for two elections, they should be got in order for revision by reference to the lists to be published on August 15th.

### **Electoral Lists and Register**

The Lists are published on August 15 and the Register on October 15. Two free copies of the Lists and eight copies of the Register or six copies, including two printed on alternate pages may be claimed from the R.O. by the Constituency Party Agent or Secretary, and appropriate sections can thus be distributed to the Wards.

Note that municipal candidates or their agents cannot claim free copies from the R.O.

### **Policy and Platform**

The Executive should prepare early the main items of policy for the elec-

tion address and platform. Naturally the present councillors should be consulted for their suggestions and observations.

At an early and appropriate time special meetings of candidates and election speakers should be held to drill them in the elements of the local programme. A particularly efficacious idea is to arrange blackboard talks by councillors who can deal with particular subjects. The whole point is this—the councillor must not merely make a speech about "Housing" but must tell the candidates and speakers what story of local housing they must put across to the electors. The main points should be displayed on the blackboard. Let it be reiterated—if the councillor speechifies the idea is lost, it is the facts of the story to be told upon which the councillor must lecture. To critics who say this creates a gramophone platform the answer is, the candidates have a town's story for the townspeople and each will put it across in his own personal or colourful way.

### **Organising for Victory**

Running an election campaign for Victory requires proper planning, and a preliminary to this is to get a clear idea of what the voting problem is. Consider the last municipal election results in a ward. Compare the figures with the general election canvass figures, or if possible the general election poll for the area. This will give you an idea whether the municipal poll figures are tight or whether there is ample chance of expansion. Now estimate what vote the opposition might attain if it runs an intensive campaign. It can now be calculated what figure Labour would need to envisage to be fairly safe for success. If thirty or more per cent. is added to this figure it would make a canvass target of favourables which should be recorded.

For instance in an ordinary way if the results of the last election was Labour 1,536, Tory 1,372, then it might appear the Tories by extra effort could possibly raise their vote to over 1,500. Obviously if Labour desires to be sure of success it must think in terms of bidding for a 1,700 vote, and so make a target figure of 1,900 promises or more to be got if possible.

The above is mentioned as indicating

an approach to the problem. Naturally in different cases various considerations will affect the estimate. In the case mentioned much would depend on whether the conditions in the ward allow of easy or mean hard building up of a bigger vote. With a calculated objective in view the campaign can be planned on the basis of the favourables to be mobilised for polling day.

If the suggestions in this article are noted and acted upon, the next duties will have already presented themselves and October will not find a party trying to improvise a rickety election machine at the last moment.

NOTE.—The booklet "*Conduct of Local Elections*," 1/3 post free from Head Office, is available to help parties, candidates and agents.

## The Union Executive Gets To Work

By REG. STANTON, General Secretary, National Union of Labour Organisers and Election Agents

The Annual Conference put on to the shoulders of the Executive a full year's work, and the Executive has lost no time in settling down to its task.

Most of the time of its meeting early in July was spent in a preliminary discussion of the problems and difficulties involved in removing the present unsatisfactory and insecure conditions of employment.

A questionnaire is to be circulated to members almost immediately on this matter with a view to providing for the Executive at its next meeting—on September 22—a comprehensive survey of the existing facts relating to Agency appointment and service, the methods by which they are financed, and the income to the Parties by way of subscriptions, fees and special efforts and stunts. With this detailed background it is hoped to prepare a practical statement which will be submitted for District discussion.

### Rules Revision

The promise made to the Conference to deal with the rules is also actively in hand, and a copy of existing rules will be circulated shortly to all members, and between now and next Conference it is hoped by submission of revised drafts to districts to have ready for adoption by Conference an agreed set of rules worthy of the organisation and the movement to which we belong.

The Executive unanimously elected Coun. F. T. Watson, J.P. (Midlands), as Chairman and J. G. Davies (South Wales) as Vice-Chairman.

The General Secretary, Mr. R. Stanton, was appointed the Union's representative on the Executive of the National Federation of Professional Workers.

Messrs. F. T. Watson, J. G. Davies and R. Stanton were appointed as the Union representatives on the Adjustments Board, with Mr. Ben Wilson as substitute representative.

### News From London

London District of the Union had an excellent attendance at its July meeting, notwithstanding holidays and two by-elections in the area which kept quite a few regular members away. It was very encouraging to see the new members taking a keen interest in the Union activities.

Business was mainly concerned with Annual Conference matters and their subsequent preliminary consideration by the Union Executive. The District noted with pleasure that conference decisions were being actively pursued.

Mr. D. H. Daines, acting Secretary of the London Labour Party, addressed the meeting on one or two problems in the London Area and sought the co-operation of the members of the District in overcoming them. Such assistance was readily promised and a sub-committee appointed to go more in detail with Mr. Daines and those concerned.

As was commented by more than one member, a very welcome development of consultation and utilisation of the experience of full-time agents of the Party.

# The Parties Pay As They Go

*A Grand Job of Budget Balancing*

By LORD SHEPHERD

One of the duties falling upon Transport House is that of keeping Constituency Labour Parties up-to-date with their payments to National Funds and in the course of years it has not always been a pleasant function to undertake. Dunning people for money never is pleasurable, and without doubt the people at Headquarters have been universally condemned as heartless, avaricious and totalling lacking in those sympathetic qualities which are considered to be essential. The criticism and comments have been borne manfully because every penny has been required to keep national accounts straight and to provide the National

Executive Committee with those resources which alone can enable that body to discharge its proper functions to the Movement.

*Having said so much, it can now be added that Constituency Parties, in so far as 1945 is concerned, have established a record of which they can be proud and for which Transport House can be grateful. Never in the history of the Party has so little been owed by so many, both in respect of membership contributions and payments to the By-Election Insurance Fund.*

It is, I think, an occasion for mutual congratulations as the following figures will show:—

## DUES STILL UNPAID FOR 1945

Area	Membership Fees	By-Election Fund
Northern ... ... ...	£5 by 1 Party	£5 by 1 Party
Lancashire & Cheshire ...	£27 4s. 7d. by 3 Parties	£45 by 5 Parties
Yorkshire ... ... ...	£10 by 2 Parties	£25 by 2 Parties
Home & Southern ...	1s. 8d. by 1 Party	£10 by 1 Party
London ... ... ...	£5 by 1 Party	£44 by 4 Parties
South Western ...	£16 11s. 3d. by 3 Parties	£25 by 1 Party
Eastern Counties ...	NIL	£10 by 1 Party
Wales ... ... ...	£1 os. 10d. by 1 Party	NIL
Scotland ... ... ...	£15 12s. 6d. by 3 Parties	£121 10s. by 6 Parties
East Midlands ... ...	NIL	£5 by 1 Party
West Midlands ... ...	£57 6s. 8d. by 4 Parties	£15 by 3 Parties

It will be seen from the above table that Membership Contributions outstanding total a mere £117 17s. 6d., and By-Election Fund arrears only total £305 10s. od. It is to be hoped that they will never be greater at the end of any future year.

The National Executive Committee has not been without advice about the continued need of the By-Election Insurance Fund in view of the sums now standing to its credit as reported to the Annual Party Conference, i.e. £26,523.

That balance, however, has grown out of the war-time Electoral Truce, and is not an indication that the rate of contribution to the Fund has been

too high. The National Executive Committee is now confronted with the necessity of fighting all By-Elections as they arise, subject as they are to the increased cost of election contests owing to the general rise in prices. Moreover, when it is recalled that the Fund in pre-war days never reached complete solvency, it will no doubt be appreciated that the balance, large as it is, will not last for ever. Provided the Annual Premiums are regularly paid the balance will, however, stave off any need for the National Executive Committee to call on the Movement for larger contributions to the Fund for some years to come.

# Choosing Council Candidates

## *Selection Procedure Outlined*

**By REG. UNDERHILL, National Agent's Department**

Emphasis is repeatedly laid on the need for local parties to exercise care in selecting local government candidates to ensure that a high standard of representation is achieved. The Constitution of the Party provides excellent machinery for these selections and ensures the highest degree of democratic direction.

In view of the many enquiries made from time to time, it is well worth while to outline the procedure laid down.

Every affiliated and Party organisation sending delegates to the General Committee must be invited to submit nominations. The qualifications for nomination as local government candidates are similar to those that apply to parliamentary candidates. All nominees must be Individual Members of the Party, and, if eligible, be a member of a bona-fide Trade Union.

On receipt of the various nominations, party secretaries are advised to send a duplicated questionnaire for completion by the nominee. This should be drawn up so as to secure information on name, address, age, Party and Trade Union membership, previous experience as a public representative and details of activity within the Movement.

The nominee should sign this statement in which he also would undertake to accept, and conform with the Standing Orders for the Labour Group approved by the National Executive Committee.

### **The Final Decision**

The General Committee must consider the full list of nominations and it has the final decision as to whether endorsement shall be given. The List of duly endorsed nominations is then circulated to the ward committees where the General Committee has decided there shall be a contest.

All members of the respective Ward Committee must be invited to a meeting to select from the List the candidate or candidates for the Ward. This meeting must be held jointly with the Executive Committee of the Party concerned, and the members of that body

are fully entitled to participate in the ballot to select the candidate. It should not be necessary to emphasise that the Executive Committee should use this right to vote with the greatest discretion. In the Divided Boroughs outside London the Executive Committee referred to is that of the Central or Borough Labour Party.

Once this selection is made it is final and cannot be varied by the Executive or General Committees, always providing that, should a dispute arise, the General Committee of the Party shall take such action as may be necessary.

In rural areas where an electoral division covers more than one local party, steps should be taken to form a joint committee to conduct the nomination and selection of candidates within the provisions outlined above. Where travelling difficulties in rural areas prevent the calling of a joint meeting of all members, a properly constituted delegate meeting may be given this authority.

These provisions are very clear and should cause but few problems—yet they do arise. Within these rules, Local, Borough or Divisional Parties, as the case may be, should determine a procedure to be adopted to implement the provisions laid down.

### **Power to Interview**

The General Committee must retain its authority in the endorsement of all nominations, but this does not prevent the Executive Committee, or a specially-appointed Credentials Committee, being authorised to consider first the nominations and to bring forward recommendations thereon to the General Committee. The Executive or Credentials Committee should be given power to interview every nominee before a recommendation was made.

Parties should also give more care to the conduct of the selection meeting, which it is again emphasised must be held jointly with the Executive Committee and to which all members in the electoral area concerned must be invited.

Reports indicate that selections in some areas are made without a single nominee appearing before the selection meeting. Parties would do well to introduce a similar procedure to that obtaining for selections of Parliamentary candidates. A short list should be drawn up consisting of from four to six nominees and these should be invited to the selection meeting.

#### A Clear Majority

At the selection meeting the invited candidates should determine by lot the order of appearing before the meeting. Each candidate should then speak for five or ten minutes (the period having been previously determined) after which a further given

period should be allocated for questions. After all candidates have been heard, a ballot should be taken and no candidate should be declared elected until he or she has received a clear majority of the total votes cast. This is achieved by eliminating those candidates at the bottom of the poll on the first ballot. If no candidate secures a clear majority on the first count, it may require a second or even a third ballot.

Labour's candidates must be first-class men or women, and the machinery of the Model Rules gives full scope to ensure that only the best are selected, but these Rules need to be wisely implemented.

## How East Lewisham Does It

*One of our Most Successful Parties reviews progress in the first half-year of 1946*

**By J. W. RAISIN, Secretary and Agent, East Lewisham Labour Party**

In November last year, while yet in the throes of the Borough Council Election and its aftermath, the general council of the East Lewisham Labour Party resolved that the year 1946 must be a year of Party development. The very fact of having won a great parliamentary victory, with a turnover of nearly 22,000 votes and of having secured for the first time a very large Labour majority on the Borough Council, appeared to us, not so much an occasion for rejoicing—although we did rejoice!—but rather as a time for stocktaking. We had won the approval of the bulk of our fellow-citizens. Good. Now the question was: Was our Party locally good enough, strong enough, sufficiently broadly based to bear the burden of this great trust?

We set about an intensive examination into our organisation, both centrally and in the wards. The elections of 1945 had brought out certain weaknesses—and the L.C.C. election of March, 1946, was to throw those defects into greater relief—and we wished to know whether these were due merely to the strains and stresses of an intensely contested election campaign, with more than usual of improvisation in its running, or were occasioned by inherent faults.

#### More Members Needed

So we carefully looked into our affairs and quickly came to our most important conclusion, namely, that our membership was too small (it stood at 3,045 at 31st December, 1945). Too small for what? For providing a really active body of workers. Some readers of the *Labour Organiser* may feel somewhat discouraged by this discovery, but the facts of the local situation must be taken into account.

To begin with, East Lewisham is a very large constituency, its present electorate being all but 90,000, and, for a London constituency, it is also large in area. Second, it has a big diversity of social classes ranging from casual labourers to senior civil servants and the like. The nine wards of East Lewisham have electorates ranging from 4,708 to 18,658, and of the twenty-nine polling districts, the smallest has 407 electors and the largest 6,245.

From these facts it can be seen that to ensure a really sound organisation we needed, as a basis, a large and very widely-spread membership. Every polling district must be capable of meeting its own electoral needs.

#### Fixing a Target

Looked at in this way we found that there was a good deal to be desired

—and there still is! Some of our polling districts were staffed with a mere handful of members, others had hundreds. In some the ratio of members to electors was as high as 11 per cent., while in others it was below 1 per cent. (Note that the ratio is given in respect of electorate and not in respect of Labour vote. This is surely the correct attitude of a democratic party in power: its claim to authority rests upon its capacity to represent all sections of the community, and it cannot do that unless it has adequate membership contacts with the electorate of every area.)

Our first step was to determine upon a "target" figure of new membership for each polling district. Two polling districts having already a very substantial total in relation to their electorates were given *nil* figures. The targets for the remainder varied between twenty and ninety. The next stage was the execution of the membership recruitment. Here, the existence in nearly all the polling districts of "Polling District Officers" has proved to be of immense value. It can be stated definitely that wherever our polling district officers are well versed in their functions, the results have been most gratifying. A three-months' campaign was inaugurated of which, at the moment of writing, two weeks have still to run.

#### Hitting the Target

The total target was 1,250, and the intake to date is 1,078, so that we

shall almost certainly reach our main objective. However, on breaking down the results into polling districts, we are by no means pleased with ourselves! Whereas several polling districts have achieved considerably over 100 per cent. of their target, others have obtained less than 25 per cent. (This requires qualification in so far as the canvassing for one or two wards is organised on a central basis, each polling district being dealt with in turn.) Plainly, we have still a good deal to do in many of our areas, and in an extended campaign the areas concerned are to be dealt with specially. Nevertheless, an astonishing progress is already to be observed. The deliberate effort to recruit from all areas simultaneously has enormously strengthened our Party organisation, with substantially improved attendances at ward meetings.

But perhaps the best proof of success is in membership subscriptions. Last year, we recorded with pride that, in a year in which the Party had been "all out" in election activity (except while we were dodging the V1's and the V2's) we collected £485 18s. 6d. in subscriptions. In the first six months of 1946 we have collected £394 15s. Again, the test of progress must be: Does this result reflect advance in all sectors? The general council was therefore gratified to receive the following comparative table of progress by wards:

#### STATEMENT OF PARTY MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS for the year 1945 and the first half-year 1946

WARD	Members at 31/12/45	Subscriptions, 1945	Members at 30/6/46	Subscriptions, first half-year 1946		
				£	s.	d.
Church	89	15 13 2	154	15	11	11
Village	209	24 17 6	198	13	16	4
Park	290	37 14 7	328	34	5	11
Hither Green	332	55 18 5	471	48	5	6
Catford	125	27 1 11	153	19	7	10
Bellingham	695	109 16 8	981	103	0	3
Downham	1,022	170 2 8	1,099	115	0	0
Manor	88	11 11 7	136	9	19	5
South	195	33 2 0	297	35	7	10
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3,045</b>	<b>485 18 6</b>	<b>3,817</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>

### Quality of Membership

Our general conclusion on this aspect of Party development is that we have done fairly well, but there are areas requiring close attention if future weaknesses are to be avoided.

So much for the size of Party membership. What about quality? Well, we have always known that we must have both quality as well as quantity, and so our scheme of Party development is designed to encourage and foster throughout all units of the Party the desire and ability of our members to take a fuller part in Party and public affairs. A whole paper should be devoted to this side of our

recent work, but mention must be made of our progress in the field of political education, under the direction of our distinguished Political Education Officer, Mr. Patrick Gordon-Walker, M.P. Suffice it here to say that we all feel that we have in this embarked upon a great adventure.

In taking general stock of the turn of the year, we feel that our Party is in good fettle, although with not a few weaknesses—but, more important, is rapidly assuming the shape and characteristics appropriate for a local unit of a democratic political party which has achieved power and intends to retain it.

## FIGHTING BRITAIN'S STRANGEST DIVISION

By PROPHET SMITH

*Fighting almost a one-man battle, former deck-hand Prophet Smith put up a wonderful performance for Labour in Orkney and Shetland at the General Election, polling 5,208 against the Tory's 6,304. Here he describes some of the difficulties of electioneering and political organisation in Britain's most isolated constituency.*

All rural divisions are, by common consent, difficult and costly to organise and to fight, and from the entire list of rural constituencies my experience emboldens me to say that Orkney and Shetland is the most difficult of all.

The fact that the terrain is well known to me somewhat diminishes the formidable aspect of the physical obstacles. Yet during the campaign last June, I found that travelling reduced me to exhaustion and harassed my election agent whose task of organising a centrally controlled team of workers was cancelled out by the division of the constituency into two groups of islands separated by 60 miles of sea.

### No D.L.P.s

It is almost impossible to convey realistically the difficulties of transport and travel, although it may help somewhere towards that end to mention that it is not possible financially to have a proper constitutional D.L.P. organised at all. In fact, for 30 delegates to meet anywhere on either group of islands would cost something in the region of £100, and would mean that some of the delegates would have to be a week away from their homes.

All this will be better appreciated when it is pointed out that the constituency is composed of the Shetland

group of islands and the Orkney group, and that the only means of travel between the two is by air and that travel within the groups is by road, ferry and foot-slogging. In some instances one travelled by car for 40 miles and then walked for half an hour to meet a dozen crofters in a village school, and some of those attending had had to walk five and six miles from their remote, scattered crofts to attend.

### Tory Had Private Plane

Unless a candidate was backed by unlimited funds, it was impossible to cover anything but the fringe of the constituency, and I found it not possible to meet electors on the islands of "Fair Isle," "Skerries" and "Foula" in the Shetland group, and "North Ronaldshay," "Shapinsay" and "Flotta" in the Orkney group. The Tory was more fortunate; he had a private plane at his disposal and covered a greater radius in one day than what one could do by car and ferry in a week. At many of the islands it was not possible to get farther than the jetty at which the mail and cargo ferry-boat discharged and loaded; and some of the best meetings I held were organised impromptu at the landward end of a jetty or in a fish store attended by crofters, fishermen and

passengers from the ferry-boat. In the greater part of Orkney no Labour representative had spoken before, and the reaction on the electors, both male and female, was remarkable; very attentive listeners, they were also very persistent hecklers.

### A Lone Fight

National speakers and outside help of any kind was un procurable; the fight was on the candidate in its entirety, although I had the able assistance and enthusiastic support of one of Scotland's old and capable election agents, J. J. Fraser, of Blantyre, and the devoted service of small, but determined Parties in Lerwick and Kirkwall, the two sizeable towns in the constituency. Some considerable assistance was also given by troops of Labour persuasion stationed in the islands, especially by their clever questioning of my opponents at meetings.

One tradition that lives politically in Orkney and Shetland is that of the vote of confidence in the candidate. At the termination of the election meeting someone moves: "That the candidate is a fit and proper person to represent the constituency in Parliament." If there is any opposition present a counter-motion is put and a vote taken, and the winning side has a propaganda flail to lash the opposition with.

### Scottish Organiser's Visit

I have honestly to admit that the sheer physical obstacles made the breaking-in for the Labour Party of the virgin political soil of Orkney and Shetland somewhat a scrappy affair during the election campaign last year. Previous to my arrival, early in June, to open the fight, there had been a short visit from Mr. J. Anson, Scottish Organiser, who had inspired the local

Parties with the prospects of a winning fight and for their numbers and experience no candidate had a more willing or enthusiastic band of devoted socialist workers. The election was tackled with £200 of a fighting fund, and with the electors and the money to woo, despite the fact that the electors are scattered over 30 inhabited islands, the campaign accounts were met with approximately £200 of a surplus in hand.

The Divisional Labour Party are now busy building for the next fight when they intend to make certain that the seat is won. I do not doubt their ability to organise unaided a system of party cells throughout the scattered districts that would spring into life and determine the issue when the occasion demands; but, I think it will be granted that they do deserve the support and assistance of the Party on a national basis to encourage and to guide them. Personally, as a Shetland Islander—I was brought up on one of the small nine-acre crofts and know the economic problems from personal experience—I was most satisfied that the election results showed almost a third of the electors voting Labour, although disappointed that the seat had not been won at the first attempt.

To other candidates and agents in other rural areas I say count your blessings when you fight a seat that only the "Daily Express" of the national dailies trickles in by daily mail plane, and where a week-old "Daily Herald" at the crux of an election campaign is welcomed like an ingot of gold, then you feel that you have a grudge at the support proffered to rural constituencies by the National Executive.

*Profile of HINLEY ATKINSON*

*By JACK CUTTER*

## Yorkshire's Gift to London

Twelve years ago, scenting an exciting battle from afar, I took a day or two off and went to London to give a hand in the L.C.C. elections. That was in 1934, when Lord Beaverbrook was conducting the first of his ill-starred series of interventions in election campaigns. His "Evening Standard" was setting itself a new record in

vituperation with every edition. It poured out a stream of invective, abuse and contumely against the Labour candidates, working itself into a frenzy as the campaign progressed until, on polling day, it adopted the slogan, "Keep Out the Hooligans!" and its leader writers became almost incoherent in their furious rage.

The one man in London who was least moved by all this carpet devouring was Hinley Atkinson, the London Labour Party Organiser and director of the election machine. "Beaverbrook," he said, "is our best publicity asset. His election psychology is disastrous to the side he supports. The electors detest abuse, and as he does nothing but abuse, he does nothing but help us."

### Labour London

When the votes were counted that night, Labour secured its first majority and was in control of the world's largest city. Hinley Atkinson was vindicated. Beaverbrook was confounded.

His Lordship would have been well advised to take a lesson from this experience, but, with all an egocentric's capacity for absorbing punishment, he repeated his tactics in 1945 on a larger scale and his unfortunate protégés met with larger disaster. Undaunted, he is still at it in concert with his Kemsley Press co-corrupters.

Meanwhile, in London, the 1934 victory was repeated with interest in 1937 and again in 1946. It was underlined by Labour majorities won in one Metropolitan Borough after another until only five now remain in anti-Labour control.

*Hinley Atkinson, the artificer of these resounding victories, has just resigned the Labour Organisership of London after 16½ years of remarkable service in that office. He went to London from Birmingham just after the 1929 election in which he shook that (then) stronghold of Toryism by scoring six Labour wins out of the twelve constituencies.*

Before Birmingham, he had been Agent in his native Yorkshire and in his native constituency of Skipton, for he was born in the picturesque township of Ingleton in the shadow of the Ingleborough mountain, that outstanding feature of the Backbone of England.

### Shrewd and Solid

Hinley's father was a stone-mason and a craftsman who shaped the stones from the surrounding Pennines. Hinley also became a craftsman, following what he proudly describes as "the honourable calling of village shoemaker." There is a quiet dignity in the very sound of these crafts and one

can understand that the man so bred and reared should have his thorough, clear mind, his shrewd foresight and solid reliability, yet should also be sensitive and responsive to the warm, friendly, decent things of life.

*He has always had a strong belief in the dignity of his profession of Labour Party Organiser. Had he chosen to become a propagandist, he would have been a great orator. Had he become a public representative he would now have held high place as a brilliant administrator. But chance, choice or flair made him an organiser, and his record in that less spectacular but more important sphere is unsurpassed.*

London has given the Labour Movement many famous victories apart from its local government elections. John Wilmot's memorable win in East Fulham in 1933 marked the turn of the tide after the 1931 ebb. The by-elections in Peckham, 1936; Central Wandsworth and North Islington in 1937; West Fulham, North Southwark and Kennington in 1938 were all milestones in the Party's progress and Hinley was organiser in charge of them all. In the crowning achievement of the 1945 election, London returned 48 Labour members out of the total 62.

### A Clean Fighter

He has laid down his duties with his honours thick upon him and he leaves to his successor the difficult task of living up to a great record. But he also leaves a fine group of good colleagues who have benefited by his fellowship and by his training.

He continues to forge another link between the Party and the "Daily Herald" and, as Labour Movement Relations Officer, he will bring many advantages to both. He has never put into words his formula for success, but from a dozen years of friendship and collaboration with him I feel competent to say it would be something like this: "To win elections (and that is our job), lay your groundwork well ahead; plan details thoroughly; carry out your plan no matter what the other side may do or say, and when the election comes, hit them with everything you've got."

*It's a good formula. He could justifiably add "Keep your fight clean," for Hinley, veteran of a hundred battles, fought always with clean hands.*

# PUTTING ON A PLAY

By JACK DALY, Hornsey Labour Party

The writer has had considerable experience as a producer for amateur dramatic societies, and his practical hints will be found of great value by local parties who are interested in amateur theatricals.

You may not think that there is any relationship between acting and politics apart from the masquerades of the Tories and the theatricals of the Communists—but acting can be a great help to the budding politician.

To have a commanding presence, to stand and walk correctly, to learn to speak properly and to gain the confidence for facing an audience—all these things can be, and are, useful to the embryo politician—and apart from all this amateur dramatics is great fun.

Well, how to start? You need of course accommodation and human talent. Well, we can't say much about the first so let's concentrate on the latter.

### Finding a Producer

*Here your key problem is to find a producer—solve this and you're half-way to success—he or she must be a person with experience of the stage, although not necessarily of production.*

Your producer is responsible for everything regarding the production—so having chosen one, give him a free hand—and do as he says!

Second-in-command is the stage manager, here again experience is useful but not essential. Your stage manager is responsible for lighting, furniture, properties, etc., and will require an efficient staff—and here's a chance for your electricians, carpenters, furniture removers, etc., to do their bit.

"Props"—that is attending to all the incidentals of the stage dressing is usually one person's job and can be the most interesting of the lot.

Everyone who acts should be able to do "straight make-up" but until they can, and for all "character" make-up have an expert do the job. Many a romantic scene has been spoilt by the hero looking like the "panto" comic!

### Hiring Scenery

Incidental music needs careful planning to harmonise with the play and if "recorded" this is another stage staff

job. If "live" it can usually be left to the musicians.

*It is best to hire your scenery for a start and here your stage manager must co-operate with the producer in getting the best set for the particular stage.*

Furniture can usually be borrowed from the members—but do plan it to suit the play and the set—don't use tubular steel furniture in "Little Women!"

The last person back stage is the person whom no one wants to hear—the prompter. Your producer may want to prompt himself—if so, you're in luck, otherwise someone must be "persuaded"—and it is a most important job requiring someone very keen who will attend the last few rehearsals and get to know the weak spots of the cast and to know when they are "lost" and not just pausing for effect.

"Front-of-the-house" staff needed include, if possible, a house manager, box office staff, usherettes and programme sellers.

Preliminary help wanted is a business manager to take the "detail" business work away and a publicity manager whose job it is to ensure that you get an audience.

### The Actors

And now we come to the actors! It will be found advisable to elect a small play choosing and casting committee, who will consider many things in their choice of play—size of stage, percentage of males to females available for acting, and for a start they will be well advised to choose a play with one set and few properties as this cuts down work and expenses, and to steer away from costume plays.

*Having chosen the play the committee notifies the members and gives them a chance to read it and apply for parts. Hold a play reading and try out your applicants—retire and make your decision—and remain friendless all the remainder of your life!*

Next, rehearsals—sixteen and a dress rehearsal are ample for a 3-act play. Don't delay production too long, 10 weeks from beginning to end is just right. If you've a hall with a stage—perfect—if not, make your stage by

placing chairs round the room the size of the stage.

Hand props should be used at all rehearsals. Carry a pencil to mark your book as directed by the producer. Remember that a play requires team spirit and that the smallest part is as essential as the biggest, and if all you have to do is to say "Good morning, sir," you can say it badly and spoil the scene.

#### Beware Propaganda

The following general hints may be useful:—

*Don't try to get too much propaganda in your play selection—many "left" plays are bad theatre!—be satisfied with Shaw and Priestley who are firstly playwrights and secondly propagandists!*

Membership of the British Drama League at £1 1s. od. per year will bring you many advantages, including the hiring of books at a very cheap rate.

Hiring of furniture can be expensive—enquire first!

Look carefully at the lighting equipment of your hall—you'll probably need to improve it!

Use your local papers for publicity—but give 'em an occasional advert.

*And lastly here are a few plays which may be useful: "They Came to a City," Priestley; "Charity Begins," Richmal Crompton; "Tony Draws a Horse," Lesley Storm; "Love from a Stranger," Frank Vosper; and just a couple of one-acts, "The Playgoers," Pinero; and "The Ghost of Jerry Bundler," W. W. Jacobs.*

## Organising Week-end Schools

By A. L. WILLIAMS, Organiser, East & West Ridings

One-day and week-end schools are a valuable means of political education. That this is generally recognised is shown by the growing number of schools organised by local Labour Parties and the Regional Councils.

A school is associated with study and those who attend usually are serious-minded people anxious to add to their store of knowledge. The lecturer is not concerned with impressing his audience with his powers of oratory, so much as he is with giving them information and providing the basis for a discussion.

The size of the audience, such an important matter in a public meeting, is a secondary issue in a school. A school is successful if the quality of the lectures and the discussion has been high.

*Organisers of public meetings demand top-liners as speakers to fill their halls. Organisers of schools do not have to depend on national figures to make their ventures a success. What are needed are subjects of interest and lecturers with some special knowledge to discuss them.*

A one-day school has two sessions and a week-end school three or four sessions. Where possible the separate sessions should deal with some aspect of the same subject, or with subjects that are interrelated.

#### Selecting Students

For instance, a day school on electioneering might have one session on the preparations for an election and another on fighting the election, and a week-end school on the work of the Labour government might have three sessions, each of which is devoted to some particular aspect of government policy.

Students should be selected, either by affiliated organisations or by the organisers of the school. If the school is dealing with some popular subject the invitation to appoint students should be extended to all affiliated organisations in the vicinity.

*If the school is concerned with some technical matter, such as electioneering, the invitation should make it clear that only those who intend to play a prominent part in elections should be appointed. Other schools are held for specially selected persons, e.g. Municipal candidates.*

For the women's week's schools, many of the scholarships are given following a written test.

Notices should be posted to organisations at least five weeks before the school is to be held to ensure that those organisations having monthly meetings are able to consider the matter. Names and addresses of those appointed to attend should be sent to the organiser,

so that he may send credentials directly to the students.

Frequently students fail to take particulars at the time of their appointment and a credential sent to them a week before the school acts as a reminder, and supplies details of time of lectures, venue, etc.

A fee should be charged and this needs to be sufficient to cover the costs of the school, including the provision of tea to the students in the case of a one-day school and full board and residence in the case of a week-end school.

#### Choosing the Venue

It is necessary to take care in choosing the place at which the school is to be held. A bright room, in pleasant surroundings, contributes to the success of the school and amply repays the extra cost and trouble that may be involved.

There is a limit to the amount of information an ordinary person can absorb, so lectures should not be too long. Three quarters of an hour is quite long enough for a lecture and gives more time for questions and discussion. The chairman should have discretionary powers about the length of time for questions and that allowed

for discussion, though questions and answers often are more stimulating than discussion.

At a week-end or week's school, formal lectures may be abolished or reduced to a minimum, and informal discussion circles substituted, but competent leaders are needed to keep the discussion on the right lines.

#### The Social Side

The social side is no less important than the purely educational side. At a one-day school, students from the various organisations continue their discussions around the tea-table and occasionally the school ends with a social.

A week-end school provides much better opportunities for conviviality, and the wise organiser will see to the election of a social committee from the students at the first opportunity. A properly organised social evening will disclose a great deal of hidden talent among the students.

*The mixing of serious study with lighthearted amusement will do much to revive that splendid feeling of fellowship which was such a feature of the socialist movement in the earlier and more difficult days.*

## SCOTS READY FOR "BIG PUSH"

By J. T. ANSON

Although Scotland enters into its holiday period earlier than South of the Border, and is now well into the middle of it, the Federations and D.L.P.s have not hibernated in any way. Instead they are busy preparing for the "big push" which the Scottish Movement intends to enter upon from the late summer onwards.

The Scottish Office of the Party has been kept busy with numerous enquiries concerning the availability of speakers; Cabinet Ministers, M.P.s, and good rank and filers are in strong demand.

Through the excellent work of Mr. Taylor, the Secretary to the Scottish Council, and Mr. Tom Steele, M.P., the Secretary of the Scottish Parliamentary Labour Group, arrangements have been made for the services of Scottish M.P.s to be available to the Parties for a continuous autumn and winter campaign of meetings and driving for members.

The geographical and transport difficulties which Scotland represents cannot be overcome by the customary method of utilising the services of speakers for a series of meetings during a week-end. So great are the distances to be covered in order to reach a third of the divisions that nothing less than a week of touring will justify the expense, discomfort, and trouble necessary to reach them. Therefore, the Scottish Parties, like English ones, wanting their full pound of service from speakers, are organising their propaganda meetings through the medium of the Federations wherever possible. As some divisions cover a whole county, with difficult means of transport at their disposal, they are working on the same principle as a Federation works, that of planning a tour rather than a weekend of meetings. Our Northern Federations have already made their plans for a series of tours each of which will be of a

week's duration and will consist of at least nine meetings and often more.

This number representing extensive travelling amounting to not less than 400 miles for an M.P. residing in Glasgow. Thanks and all credit to the Scottish Parliamentary Labour Group for their excellent co-operation through which we have been able to make the necessary arrangements. It should be said that, although only the winter campaign has been dealt with, many of our Parliamentary members are giving to the Scottish Labour movement a substantial part of their summer recess period to our divisions in the north and

that goes for the Rt. Hon. Hugh Dalton, too. If any other member of Parliament wants to see the grandeur which is Scotland, then let him or her drop a line to the Scottish Office saying that we can have the use of their services and we will be happy to make full use of them.

In the industrial and more central areas the development of propaganda is not being overlooked although it follows the more normal paths of organisation because it is easier of access and the services of our M.P.s will be used to the full during the coming months.

## Lancashire & Cheshire Have 250 Speakers

By REG. WALLIS

Since its inception the Lancashire and Cheshire Regional Council has done its utmost to develop propaganda and educational work in the region and a speakers' panel comprising about 250 names, has been included in the Annual Report of the Executive Committee. The speakers on this panel are drawn from almost all the constituencies in the region and the speakers cover all aspects of Party Policy.

Following the decision of the National Executive Committee that the Regional Office should also be responsible for the allocation of the dates of Members of Parliament within its area meetings were arranged with the Lancashire and Cheshire Parliamentary Group at the House of Commons at which questions of propaganda, organisation and membership, etc., were discussed. To assist the Regional Council in making as speedy as possible arrangements the Parliamentary Group appointed Mr. Charles Royle, M.P. (West Salford) to act for the Regional Council. Application for Members of Parliament within the region will now be made to the Regional Office and through Mr. Royle it is anticipated that the requirements of Divisional and Local Labour Parties will be met without delay.

The Regional Executive Committee appreciates the ready response of the Parliamentary Group to its approaches and is especially indebted to Mr. Royle for his co-operation in this important phase of the region's work.

### 32 Leagues of Youth

On February 2, the Regional Executive Committee convened a special conference of representatives of Leagues of Youth and delegates from Divisional Labour Parties within the League of Youth age limits for the purpose of considering League of Youth development in the region. The conference was exceptionally well attended, there being 121 delegates present representing 20 Leagues of Youth and 21 Divisional Labour Parties. This conference was addressed by Mr. Will Nally, M.P., and the proposals of the Regional Council for League of Youth development were outlined by the Secretary. Following this conference, the Regional Executive Committee drafted proposals for the establishment of a Youth Advisory Committee and these proposals were presented to a League of Youth delegate conference on May 18, at which 25 Leagues of Youth were represented. The composition of the Advisory Committee, which was approved, is to be seven representatives appointed by Leagues of Youth on an area basis as follows:

Manchester and District Leagues	2
Liverpool and District	...
South-East Lancashire and	1
North-East Cheshire	...
Rest of Cheshire Leagues	...
North Lancashire Leagues	...

and five representatives from the Organising Sub-Committee of the Regional Council, together with the

Secretary. The League of Youth representatives were then appointed. Immediately the Organising Sub-Committee representatives are appointed, a meeting of the Youth

Advisory Committee is to be convened to review the work of the League in the region. There are now 32 Leagues of Youth operating in the Lancashire and Cheshire Region.

## Quiz on Politics

*Many Ward Parties are now running Novelty Evenings with a Quiz on Politics as its main feature. Here is a specimen Quiz drawn up—"with sweat, toil and tears"—by Clem Jones, South-West Area organiser. Thank you, Clem, for a nice set of posers, which we hand on free of charge to all Parties in search of brain-teasers. We have omitted a number of the questions which had only local application. Answers are on page 18.*

### QUESTION.

1. What was the date of Polling Day at the General Election last year?
2. What was the date on which the votes were counted?
3. Name the present Prime Minister and his predecessor.
4. In what year did women first receive the Parliamentary vote?
5. Who wrote "The Red Flag"?
6. Where did the tune to which we sing "The Red Flag" come from?
7. Name the President of the Board of Trade.
8. How many Labour M.P.s were elected at the General Election of 1945?
9. Who was the first woman who sat in the House of Commons?
10. What is the minimum membership contribution to the Labour Party?
- 11. At what age did women receive the vote in 1918?
12. Name the Lord President of the Council.
13. What was the first Act of nationalisation passed by the Labour Government?
14. Who is the First Lord of the Treasury?
15. How many times is a Bill "read" in the House of Commons?
16. What is the smallest elected unit of Local Government?
17. Name the Lord Privy Seal.
18. Where are Headquarters of the Labour Party?
19. Who is the Secretary of the Labour Party?
20. Who is the Leader of the Labour Party in the House of Lords?
21. Who is M.P. for Central Wandsworth?
22. Who is the Chief Women Officer of the Labour Party?
23. In what year were women of 21 given the vote?
24. Who is M.P. for Limehouse?



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## BRIGHTON'S LABOUR DIRECTORY

We drew attention last month to the admirable Brighton and Hove Labour Directory, which gives much valuable information regarding Labour people and organisations in the district.

Mr. Ernie Trory, of the Crabtree Press, Brighton, now writes pointing out that it is not quite correct to say that the directory was issued by the local party, as in fact it was produced as a commercial proposition by the Crabtree Press. The firm had, of course, the co-operation of the party officials and the directory was compiled, published and distributed at the firm's expense.

A few copies of the directory are still available and may be had from the Crabtree Press, 57, Tivoli Crescent, Brighton, 5, at 10d. post free. Other local parties who are considering a similar venture should certainly take a look at the Brighton production.

## ANSWERS TO QUIZ

ANSWER.	Points	Points
1. July 5th.	1	12. Rt. Hon. Herbert Morrison, M.P.
2. July 26th.	1	13. The Bank of England Act.
3. Rt. Hon. C. R. Attlee, Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill.	2	14. The Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. C. R. Attlee, M.P.
4. 1918.	1	15. Three.
5. Jim Connell.	1	16. The Parish Council.
6. An old German hymn, "Tannenbaum."	1	17. Rt. Hon. Arthur Greenwood, M.P.
7. Rt. Hon. Sir Stafford Cripps, M.P.	1	18. Transport House, Smith Square, S.W.1.
8. 393.	1	19. Mr. Morgan Phillips.
9. Lady Astor.	1	20. Viscount Addison.
10. 6d. per month. (Note: not 6/- per year, although members may pay up for a year if they like!)	1	21. Rt. Hon. Ernest Bevin.
11. 30.	1	22. Miss Mary Sutherland.
		23. 1928.
		24. Rt. Hon. C. R. Attlee, M.P.

(Continued from page 19)

## CLAIM FOR ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

I ..... apply for my name to be put on the  
October Electoral Register on account of my residence at

\* ..... on June 30, 1946. Signed .....  
Present Address .....  
Date .....

National Identity Card number .....

To the Registration Officer  
(address of his Office) .....

The Electoral Registration Regulations S.R. & O., 1946, No. 240, now supersede the previous Regulations of 1944 and 1945. (Price 1/1 net, from H.M. Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2, or through booksellers.)

\* The address here must be the address which was on the Identity Card on June 30, as this was the qualifying date.

# The Annual October Register

## THE MAIN REGISTRATION

In the *Civilian or Service Register* for the parliamentary and local government vote, on account of residence on June 30 in a constituency.

## INCIDENTAL REGISTRATIONS

In the *Business Premises Register* for the parliamentary and local government vote on account of occupying business premises of an annual value of £10 or more in another constituency from that of the residence.

In the *Ratepayers' Register* for the local government vote on account of occupying any land or premises at an address different from that on the Identity Card or different from the address of land or premises for which the Business vote has been claimed.

TIME TABLE. Qualifying Date: June 30, 1946.

Application to be entered in the Business Premises Register	... ...	Last date, July 31.
Ratepayers' Register	... ...	
Publication of Electors' Lists:		
Civilian and Service	... ...	August 15.
B.P. and Ratepayers'	... ...	Not later than August 29.
Claims and Objections	... ...	Within fourteen days of the publication of the relevant electors' lists.
Consideration of Claims and Objections		Completion on or before the 24th day after publication of the appropriate lists.
Applications to be entered in the Absent Voters' and Postal Proxy List	... ...	Before the date of a dissolution of Parliament and H.M. Proclamation, or in the case of a by-election, before date on which the Writ is received.
Application for the Service Postal Vote	... ...	To be received on the fifth day before nomination day.
Publication of the Register	... ...	October 15.

This Annual Register will be in force for all Elections during the year from October 15, 1946, to October 14, 1947.

This Register consists of two parts:—

- (a) The General Register of Parliamentary and Local Government electors
- (b) The Ratepayers' Register

Civilian Residence Register,  
Business Premises Register,  
Service Register.

Certain additional Local Govt. electors otherwise qualified by provisions of R.P.A. 1918 and 1928.

## CLAIMS

There is a period of 14 days after the day on which Electoral Lists are published in which Claims and Objections can be made.

Constituency Party Agents or Secretaries can claim two free copies of the Lists, and one of these can be distributed in parts to appropriate L.L.P.'s. or Wards or Polling Districts as the case may be for reference and inspection of names in roads and streets.

All parties should make a special effort to get "left off" persons on the Register. They should appoint a member in every street or road to record any missing names in that street or road. There is no official form supplied by the R.O., so duplicate some forms as below, and get the persons to sign them. If a claim is obviously in order, the R.O. can accept it without further formality.

(Continued on page 18)

# Labour Party Publications List

## PAMPHLETS:

"The Rise of the Labour Party." L.D.S. 1.

"Fair Shares of Scarce Goods." L.D.S. 2.

"The Bank of England and the Nation." L.D.S. 3.

"Local Government Reform." L.D.S. 4.

"Repeal of The Trade Disputes Act."

### Bournemouth Conference Speeches:

Clement Attlee: "What Labour Has Done."

Herbert Morrison: "Labour's Economic Plan."

Ernest Bevin: "Foreign Affairs."

Hugh Dalton: "Financing Labour's Plan."

All at 1 copy, 2d., post free 3d.; 12 copies, post free, 1s. 6d.; 100 copies, post free, 10s.

"About The Labour Party," by Morgan Phillips. Post free: 1 copy, 3d.; 12 copies, 1s. 6d.; 100 copies, 12s.

"Wings for Peace."

"National Service for Health."

"The Nation's Food."

"Our Land."

"International Post-War Settlement."

"Full Employment and Financial Policy."

"Social Progress in New Zealand," by the Hon. Walter Nash.

"Let Us Face the Future." Post free: 1 copy 3d., 12 1/9, 100 13/-, 500 £3 2s. 6d., 1,000 £6.

"The Secret Battalion," by Harold J. Laski.

"Coal and Power."

"Post-War Organisation of British Transport."

Post free: 1 copy 4d., 12 2/6, 50 8/-, 100 15/-.

"You Voted Left—You Did Right." Post free, 1 Copy, 4d.; 12, 2s. 6d.; 100, 16s.

"The Colonies." Post free: 1 copy 4d., 12 2/6, 50 10/-, 100 17/6.

"Rent Acts Guide." Post free: 1 copy 7½d., 6 3/-, 12 5/6.

"Leon Blum Before his Judges." Post free: 1 copy 1/4, 12 10/-, 50 £2, 100 £3 10s.

"Party Organisation." Post free: 1s. 3d.

"Conduct of Parliamentary Election." Post free 3s. 6d.

"Conduct of Local Elections." Post free: 1s. 3d.

"Speakers' Handbook." Post free: 2s. 6d.

"Local Government Handbook." Post free: 1s. 6d.

## SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES:

Pamphlets and Leaflets—Annual Conference Report (as issued) 5/- per year,  
post free.

The Labour Press Service (issued fortnightly) 5/- per year, post free.

Notes for Speakers (issued weekly) 10/- per year, post free.

Labour Party Bulletin (issued monthly), 2/- per year, post free.

Labour Woman (issued monthly), 2/6 per year, post free.

Labour (issued monthly by the T.U.C.), 3/6 per year, post free.

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